

MORE WIDTH IN THE SKIRT LINE

Paris Experimenting With a Change in the Frock's Silhouette.

THE WAIST CURVE AGAIN

Buttons of Importance—Charm of New Dress Goods—Spring Costumes.

If only every woman knew what is becoming to her and had the courage of her convictions, what a delightful summer that of 1912 might be!

Materials, costly and cheap, are lovely. Styles are so elastic that it would be almost impossible to achieve a costume beautiful yet quite without authority from at least one of the designers who rank among the fashion makers. No one man has things his own way in the Parisian dressmaking world to-day, and apparently no two men have the same way, though the houses do fall into groups according to the degree of their conservatism and radicalism in their ideals of successful dress.

Possibly one should put Worth at the head of one group. Certainly Poiret stands at the head of the other. Mme. Paquin holds an admirable vantage point between the two, which does not mean that she is lacking in originality or force, but that while viewing new and daring ideas with an open mind she refuses to lend herself to the bizarre.

This season her heart seems to be with the group that is urging at least a conservative change in silhouette, a restoration in some degree of skirt folds and defined waist lines, yet her concessions are so far as a moderate sort. Poiret shows no signs of abandoning his beloved straight and narrow lines, but even his influence is not likely to stem the rising tide very much longer. He will give women another season of possible box effects, but it seems altogether probable that the coming season will see models with which there has been experimenting for the last year coming into their own and dominating the situation.

Meanwhile it is distinctly interesting to watch the experiments, particularly the experiments dealing with that vital matter of the skirt.

The tailored costume is not likely to call for very much more material than was put into it last year and, though there is more room at the foot, this is usually accomplished in some manner that does not detract from the straight skirt line. In the popular one-piece simple frock of serge, linen and similar materials one finds the same state of things as to the skirt, but with the more sheer and supple materials, whether of cotton or silk, the designers are decidedly increasing the amount of material required for dress lengths, and the manufacturers of such fabrics are doubtless sending up prayers of thanksgiving, though the changes so far are not, by any means, so radical as those hoped for in the manufacturing world.

Experiments with Louis XV. and with



TURKISH TOWELLING.

Victorian skirt ideas are made here and there and are charmingly picturesque at their best, but the average woman looks askance at these innovations and will be converted by slow degrees. Straight falling tunics, often double or triple, crossed over the shoulders, with the skirt, the length of cutaway or panier arrangements, skirts longer on one side than on the other and caught up in soft plaits on the long side, near the foot, all these she is accepting tranquilly enough, but in each case she wants the extra fullness limp, drawn down into clinging lines.

Some of the most authoritative French makers are feeling their way among gored or ripple arrangements, widening the skirt very gradually and slightly toward the bottom instead of leaving the bottom line narrow whatever the fullness above. This, in the opinion of many, gives the most graceful and sensible of skirt lines and does not of necessity mean diffuseness or wide spread at the skirt bottom.

The triple and double scant tunic arrangements frequently seen in the new taffetas and in many other materials as well offer good opportunity for experiment with this ripple line and some of the designers have improved the opportunity, but very discreetly and unobtrusively, giving no flare to the broadening width.

In a host of cases the increased skirt fullness has to do chiefly with the upper part of the skirt and is held into comparative narrowness at the bottom, an effect unspeakably ugly if bungled, as many models have proved within the last year, but charming enough if skillfully handled in appropriate material and with proper weightings.

The boldest vagary in this line so far is due to Cheruit and it is rather amusing to hear the opinions of the women who view the various versions of her revolutionary model, which has a skirt very full at the waist, caught up in a puff by a scarf or band a little above the knees and falling but perfectly limp and straight from top to bottom. The confining band runs upward a little toward the front, so that the soft full puff falls lower in the back than at the front and the line is quaint and charming on a properly slender figure.

A full skirt held in near the bottom by a narrow scarf or ribbon run through wide eyelets in the material or finished at bottom by a flounce confined in such



A GOWN OF GREEN AND WHITE STRIPED SILK AND ANOTHER WITH A STRIPED SKIRT AND A BLUE TAFFETA JACKET.

fashion is an idea liked by another of the great dressmakers and copied by the minor designers.

A picturesque taffeta model in which blue and white stripes is combined with plain blue illustrates one phase of this treatment. A sketch of it is given in the central group and needs no description attached, though not only the skirt but the bodice, the collar and the belt in waistline are significant details, showing the new tendencies particularly evidenced in connection with the popular taffetas.

Some of the embroidered full length flouncings and robe patterns in sheer cottons and laces show embroidered eyelets introduced in the embroidery design with a view to such skirt treatment, as in one attractive little frock of deeply yellowed batiste illustrated here.

Another instance of skirt fullness confined at the bottom is to be noted in the changeable taffeta of the small cut which has a high swathed girde of the taffeta and a frankly full skirt below a bodice entirely of the creamy lace. This skirt has its fullness caught in groups of plaits into a band of the silk which is laid in three folds and borders the skirt bottom.

More interesting than any of these full skirt treatments is that of a model described last week and pictured to-day

in the large cut. This frock is one of the most successful afternoon models of the new type yet shown, and despite its definite departure from many of the

four inches. The skirt, as will be understood from the cut, used considerable material, though the lines were fairly straight, the fullness from the flatly stitched horizontal plaits across the front being drawn softly downward and back to disappear under the straight falling full back breadth.

Buttons covered with the striped silk and sewed on flat white pearl buttons so that a rim of the pearl showed beyond the silk were on sleeves and skirt. A plain tulle collar, guimped rose above the plaits and the black girde was knotted in a bow and fell in wide fringed sash ends at the right side of the back.

The matter of buttons is rather an important one it seems, and small trimming buttons, often covered with one of the materials of the costume, are much used. Clear glass or crystal, jet, ivory composition, white and colored pearl, bone in attractive colorings, dull gold and silver, crochet—all are liked, and there are many clever ways of making buttons match a frock. One of these little tricks that is very effective is to cover the button

mould with the frock material and then darn it in coarse floss or cotton.

The flat trimming buttons of pearl with holes close to one edge so that they may be sewed on in overlapping rows with no holes showing are introduced upon some of the smartest tailored models and linen frocks, and on other models the buttonholes are made very important

tenets to which women have pinned their faith during the last two seasons, it has no trace of the spectacular, the over-picturesque. As one of the women studying it, apparently a dressmaker, put it, "Now, that's a lady's frock."

It was built up in a striped taffeta of very soft lustrous quality, the coloring being a cool, soft, quiet green, white and a mere thread of black. The bodice was cut quite long on the shoulders, long close sleeves being set smoothly into a corded armhole. Double tulle frills fine plaited, one of white over another of black, finished the neck just below the throat base and ran down the left side of the bodice, disappearing with the softly fitted girde of black satin which definitely accented the long waist line and curve while not compressing the waist enough to accentuate unduly the hip curve.

The sleeves ran down well over the hands, buttoned closely around the wrists and had fringing frills of black satin running up the outer seams for about

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frocks, especially upon white or light color in combination with imitation buttonholes of black satin.

One of the most delectable morning frocks shown by a Fifth Avenue house noted for such things was in linen of an exquisite pink, warm yet soft and creamy, the perfect pink for girlish youth, and had for its only trimming an odd little collar of white flax linen bound narrowly in pink and flat black jet buttons with imitation buttonholes of black satin.

Nine-tenths of this model's success was due to the charm of its color with the chic dash of black, but its lines were good, as will be seen from the sketch. Of



PINK LINEN.

course the introduction of the black satin takes this frock out of the province of the tub frock, unless one would be willing to remove the buttons and buttonholes each time it went to the laundry, but the delicate pinks, even in the best qualities, do not stand laundering very well, so the frock would better go to the cleaner in any event.

It is hard to keep one's mind on this problem of laundering when one is choosing summer clothes and linens nowadays, for many of the most tempting materials are in delicate tones that will not stand the assaults of the ordinary laundress, but if one cannot conveniently send the frock to a cleaner whenever it is soiled or if one objects to the expense of such a proceeding it is the part of wisdom to hold to whites and colorings that are comparatively fast. The modish buffs and straws and cerise and light browns wash exceedingly well, as do some of the blues and the deeper lavenders, provided they have been dipped in salt water or a lead bath before washing.

There is a new cotton stuff which has decided claims to favor and is being much used abroad, but belongs to the group which should seek the cleaner rather than the laundress. It will wash, but the salesmen politely decline to dwell upon its tubbing qualities, and as it will be probably used more for tailoring than for other purposes it would better be cleaned anyway. Few coats come through the ordeal of tubbing with their shapelessness intact.

This cotton material is called peau de suède and has an exquisitely soft finish, but is quite firm and about of linen weight. The chief objection to it, if it can be considered an objection, is that at first glance it looks more like a very fine soft light weight woolen than a cotton. It is exceedingly supple and is offered in lovely summer shades, a pink of the same delicious tone described above in connection with linen, a lilac as fresh and summery, biscuit and very light khaki tones, soft medium blues, &c. The price is prohibitive for any one in search of inexpensive cotton frocks, the material retailing at from \$3.25 to \$3.50 a yard, but it is very wide and, smartly made, good for any afternoon purpose.

The cotton crepes and marquisettes are greatly used, the latter appearing in many novelty forms and weaves suggesting greenlines rather than the fine filmy weaves people are accustomed to associate with the word étamine. With these soft white stuffs, and with the batistes, linens, mulls too, the heavy flit laces are the approved trimming, combined usually with other laces and hand embroidery. So far one sees comparatively little of the perennial favorite Irish crochet except in narrow bands and accessory trimmings. There are popular novelty laces too in which flit is combined with embroidered linen or bold cut work.

The idea of using black tulle or colored chiffon or tulle under such heavy laces and openwork trimmings is growing, and one sees much of such treatment, particularly at skirt bottoms in place of the black satin or black velvet footband. These last two are not, however, discarded, though not so now as the tulle or chiffon. The sheer black or colored materials sometimes are used for a soft draped girde on the frock, and where plaited tulle forms the under skirt foot finish, little frills of the tulle often appear on the bodice, as in the attractive model illustrated in one of the small sketches.

In almost every lingerie, muslin and linen model the bodice neck is low, finishing either in a round line just below the base of the throat or in a V with some collar or fichu arrangement. A high transparent guimpe of plain tulle, silk, muslin or other unobtrusive sheer stuff may be added for the woman to whom a bare throat is not becoming, or a velvet band may be worn, or a narrow scarf of tulle may be wound around the throat and tied in the back or knotted once at the left side, with one weighted and left to fall forward and one behind the shoulder.

Plaited frills of tulle finish neck and sleeves of many pretty frocks, and the plain high collar of tulle with a wide plaiting of tulle around its lower edge and with or without a narrow plaiting around its upper edge is very modish. The same arrangement of frills is used with a neckband of velvet, or silk or with a collar of lace. The frill at the top of the collar is seldom actually becoming, though a few women with slender, long throats wear it successfully, but the collar with wide frill around its base is often attractive as neck finish for a simple blouse.

High collars and jabots of very fine yellowed lace are popular in Paris and lace of all kinds promises to have a record breaking season.

TAFFETAS AND QUAINNESS NOW

That Is the Combination to Be Looked for in Spring Clothes.

MODELS FULL OF CHARM

Frocks for All Occasions—The Vogue of Taffeta Felt in Millinery Too.

Not every face nor every figure lends itself to quaintness. Remembering that fact one realizes that there will be pitfalls in the way of feminine feet during the coming season. An enthusiastic endorsement of taffeta is expected, and taffeta is fairly certain to mean what one is accustomed to call the quaint in dress.

Already taffetas are making themselves felt in the fashionable world. The autumn and winter seasons have won popularity for them in Paris and sporadic testimony to this popularity has not been lacking here, but not until now, when spring signs and portents are in the air, have women been forced to take the vogue of taffeta seriously.

A casual study of the probabilities leads one to believe that the silk will have to be taken seriously, and indeed makes one fear that the fad will be epidemic and pestiferous, which is not in the least a reflection upon the silk itself. The new taffetas are lovely in quality, soft, supple, light, lustrous. They are beautiful in color too, especially in the shot effects, but, and here is the rub, they are in spite of their new suppleness hard to handle gracefully, and the types of trimming generally accepted as correct for taffeta are fussy and ugly when not applied by an artist hand.

To put it tersely, the quaintly ugly is achieved more often than the quaintly charming, and since the taffetas are to be had in cheap quality and are likely to be faddish there will probably be a deluge of cheap taffeta frocks which are neither graceful nor becoming. Even now one sees many models of this sort blossoming in the cheaper shops; yes, and even in the shops of higher standing, and they incline the observer to pessimism despite the genuine charm of the successful taffeta models seen elsewhere.

However, the role of Cassandra is an ungrateful one. It is far more pleasant to talk of successes than to prophesy failures. There are frocks of all kinds among these taffeta successes, coat and skirt costumes, one piece trotting frocks, evening frocks, tea gowns. And there are coats too, picturesque cape and dolman and mantle shapes, dust coats, evening coats.

Some of the loveliest of the taffeta evening gowns have long waisted, girde bodices and skirts slightly full, turning away in front from petticoats of chiffon of flat lace flounces. A shot pink in two tones was made in this fashion, with a petticoat of creamy lace three deep flat flounces over white satin, each headed by a garlanded riband of soft blue, which showed vaguely through the overlapped edge of the flounce above. The bodice was all of the fine creamy lace above a deep closely fitted girde of the taffeta, which had a fold of blue under its upper edge, with a quaint stuff little bow of the blue at the left side. There were touches of blue too among the lace of the short sleeves.

And there was another taffeta frock, less delicate of line but very charming, which had its skirt of shot purple and rose felled into the waistband all around, but at the bottom, drawn into clusters of loose plaits at intervals and fitted into a rather scant group or band of horizontal folds. On this band, holding each group of plaits, was a stiff little embroidered motif done in fine crewels. The skirt was so weighted and the silk so supple that the full folds of the skirt were drawn down in clinging, graceful lines instead of billowing out above the confining band.

A very deep folded girde of taffeta was swathed loosely around the waist reaching to a high bust line and above this the bodice was entirely of exquisitely fine cream lace effectively draped. One very large rose in a vivid tone harmonizing with the rose or cerise shade in the silk was thrust into the girde with the lace folds at the front.

One could go on indefinitely with descriptions of taffeta frocks. Delightful little light hued dance frocks are made up in these silks and are highly practical but will not cleanse as satisfactorily as other silks or even as chiffons. Riches, quillings, cordings, shirrings, bound fluff, ruffles, pipings are all appropriate trimmings for taffetas and some pretty models have but little of the taffetas used save in such trimmings, the main part of the frock being in some sheer stuff. Or perhaps the skirt will be entirely of taffeta while the bodice is of lace with only a little fichu of the taffeta and some taffeta trimmings finishing the short lace sleeve.

Taffeta coats were worn over lingerie and other sheer frocks last summer and even two summers ago, but new developments of this idea are appearing and some of them suggest charming summer tales. One model which illustrates the point had its coat of polonaise of changeable apricot and pink, turned back respectably from the robe of white chiffon and knotted with artful negligence in the back.

A pretty model too was one with a sort of coat tunic of geranium taffeta buttoning across the bust above a little white satin waistcoat buttoned in crystal and curving away just below the bust line, to fall straight and clinging at each side almost to the bottom of the skirt. The skirt was of white chiffon in three flat sections or flounces, each scalloped and bound narrowly with white satin and a deep white satin girde rose from natural waist line to bust line.

Taffeta is combined with serge and with other lightweight woollens in some very wearable and chic little one piece frocks for trotting wear and in coat and frock or coat and skirt suits. It is made up effectively with chiffon or tulle also and is perhaps at its best when combined with liberal quantities of some soft stuff more easily draped and handled than the silk itself. Girdles and fold bands of taffeta are a bit of a fad on some of the newest sheer frocks.

In millinery taffeta fills a conspicuous part during seasons past. It forms hats, drapped crowns, brim facing, scarfs, necks, necklets, is in fact so ubiquitous that its popularity with the fastidious seems likely to be short lived.

A Hair of the Prophet's Beard. Salonica correspondent London Times. In acknowledgement of the expressions of loyalty which have been sent in the Albanian Albanian by the Sultan to the Sherif Mehmet Bey, on a mission to the Albanians, the Sultan has ordered a hair from the beard of the Prophet which the Sultan has presented as a sign of his friendship, to the mosque at Yuchira.

EMBROIDERY AND TULLE.

TAFFETA AND LACE.

WHITE WOOL.